



New Leadership
at KSBW

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Chamber Endorsements for Salinas City Council

The Salinas Valley Chamber has announced its endorsements for the November 2020 general election. Be sure to vote on Tuesday, November 3rd and if you vote absentee, ballot return locations open beginning on October 5. Please submit your ballot early as we expect the Elections Office (and the Post Office) to be swamped even more than usual this year. You can also deliver your ballot to a polling place, but you must get your ballot in by the day of the election.

Following its process, the Salinas Valley Chamber's Candidate Review Committee solicited information from candidates and held a series of panel interviews to discuss their ideas. After the committee offered its input, our Board of Directors made the final decisions on our endorsements. We found these individuals to be most supportive of the Salinas Valley Chamber's public policy positions and friendly to the interests of the business community and the community at large. We hope you'll consider casting your vote for these worthy candidates.



Kimbley Craig

Salinas Mayor – Kimbley Craig

(There will be a new mayor because Mayor Joe Gunter passed away while in office.)

Kimbley Craig is the obvious choice for endorsement in this powerful, high profile position. She has a solid voting record of supporting economic growth and job creation as a two-term member of the Salinas City Council. She believes prosperity for businesses combined with fiscal responsibility is the proper approach to balancing the city's budget. Her experience in public relations will be useful as she represents the City of Salinas in attracting businesses and investment while rebutting

the city's detractors and competitors.

Since completing her council term in 2018, Ms. Craig has advocated for businesses as the President & CEO at the Monterey County Business Council. When coronavirus public health restrictions began in mid-March, she became a leader in Monterey County in providing local businesses with information on how to seek Paycheck Protection Program federal loans and other public and private assistance during troubled times. She has also coordinated the Leadership Monterey County program to prepare residents to be more effective leaders.

She is smart, highly competent, and not afraid to be open to the public ➡

ENDORSEMENTS - Continued on page 4

How Corpuz Contributed to Salinas

Highlights of Salinas City Manager Ray Corpuz's Accomplishments



Corpuz

Salinas City Manager Ray Corpuz retires this month. During his over 8-year tenure at the City of Salinas, Mr. Corpuz has overseen a number of initiatives that will have a lasting impact on the City. Perhaps most obviously is the design, financing, and construction of two new City facilities – the previously undersized El Gabilan Library on North Main Street has been replaced by a new state-of-the-art facility, and the Police Department has relocated from the 1950's-era Salinas Police Station on Lincoln Avenue to the community-oriented Public Safety Building on East Alisal Street.

Corpuz led efforts to put the City's fiscal house in order, most visibly in

the development and implementation of the Salinas Plan, a collection of 32 recommendations from December 2018 to eliminate the City's long-term budget woes and address the City's housing shortage. Several of these recommendations have already been implemented, saving over \$1 million already, and City staff continue to work to implement the recommendations.

Working in partnership with the agricultural sector, Ray helped develop the City as a global hub for the agricultural technology (AgTech) sector. The City was an instrumental partner in the establishment of programs to market the City as an ideal location for startups through partnerships with the THRIVE Accelerator, Western Growers Association, and Forbes Media (which has hosted five annual AgTech Summits on Main Street), while also supporting the creation of programs to expose the City's youth to technology (including Coder Dojo and Digital NEST) and increased coordination between the City and Hartnell College. ➡



Groundbreaking for
Salinas police headquarters
(with Ray Corpuz on right)

CORPUZ - Continued on page 4



MONTEREY COUNTY ADU CONFERENCE

Presented by United Way Monterey County &
The American Institute of Architects Monterey Bay (AIAMB)

United Way Monterey County's Role in Affordable Housing

United Way Monterey County's housing efforts address the shortage of affordable housing throughout Monterey County and focus on streamlining local policies and providing information to encourage the development of affordable **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)**. ADUs are secondary units built on residential lots, also known as granny units or in-law suites.

ADU Conference

UWMC and AIAMB will co-host homeowners, city officials, design professionals, builders, and affordable housing advocates for a virtual ADU conference to promote infill housing in Monterey County and equip stakeholders with the tools they need to execute ADU projects. The conference will feature Kol Peterson, ADU expert and author of Backdoor Revolution. Four interactive webinars will cover the following:

- **Homeowners:** All about navigating your ADU project. Wednesday, Sept. 16, 4–6p.m.
- **ADU Advocates:** Financing ADUs and strategizing. Thursday, Sept. 17, 10a.m.–12p.m.
- **Design Professionals & Builders:** How to advocate for your projects. Thursday, Sept. 17, 4–6p.m.
- **City Officials:** Streamlining the ADU process and regulating for results. Friday, Sept. 18, 3–5p.m.

[Register for the event here](#)

Contact kelly.dewolfe@unitedwaymcca.org with questions.

Event Collaborators: Kasavan Architects, Monterey County Association of REALTORS, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, Kasavan Construction, City of Pacific Grove, CHISPA, Justin Pauly Architects, Studio Schicketanz, Monterey Energy Group Inc., Workbench, Central Coast Builders Association, Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce, MBEP, Monterey County Farm Bureau, Carmel Chamber of Commerce, City of Monterey, City of Salinas, City of Gonzales, and City of Seaside

Kol Peterson's Professional Biography



Kol Peterson is an ADU expert based in Portland, Oregon, who has helped catalyze the exponential growth of ADUs in Portland through advocacy, education, consulting, policy work, and entrepreneurship.

Mr. Peterson is the author of *Backdoor Revolution: The Definitive Guide to ADU Development*. He is the owner of Caravan - Tiny House Hotel, the first tiny house hotel in the world, and organizer of Portland's popular ADU Tour. He is a consultant to homeowners about ADUs and teaches ADU classes to homeowners and real estate agents in Oregon, Washington, and California. He is also the editor and manager of www.accessorydwellings.org and www.buildinganadu.com.

Mr. Peterson earned his master's degree in environmental planning from Harvard Graduate School of Design. Prior to his ADU work, he worked for the federal government for ten years in Washington, DC and in Portland, Oregon.



Ensuring the Right to Vote!

by Andrea Bailey, Board Chair



2020 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Chair - **Andrea Bailey** (Chevron)
- Chair-elect - **Kristy Santiago** (KION TV)
- Past Chair - **John Bailey** (Alternative Dispute Resolution)
- Vice Chair, GRC - **Jennifer Williams** (Natividad Medical Foundation)
- Vice Chair, Finance - **Bill Hastie** (Hastie Financial Group)
- Vice Chair, Events - **Amy Gibson** (Portola Hotel & Spa)
- Vice Chair, Membership - **Julie Ann Lozano** (MBS Business Systems)

2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Jim Bogart** (Ag Industry Legend)
- **Kalah Bumba** (Consultant Community/Health)
- **Esteban Calderon** (Comerica Bank)
- **Raymond Costa** (RHC Management, dba McDonald's)
- **John Haupt** (Haupt & Associates)
- **Albert Maldonado** (MP Express Printing)
- **Rodney Meeks** (Credit Consulting Services)
- **Kathy Miller** (Aera Energy)
- **Krishna Patel** (Duda Farm Fresh Foods)
- **Brandon Patterson** (Brandon D Patterson - Windermere Valley Properties)
- **Starla Warren** (Monterey County Housing Authority Development Corporation)

CHAMBER LIAISONS

- **Peter Kasavan** (SPARC)
- **Matt Huerta** (Monterey Bay Economic Partnership)
- **Kevin Dayton** (Salinas City Center Improvement Assn.)

LEGAL COUNSEL

- **Matt Ottone**

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

- **Lindsey Knight** (Membership Development Director)
- **Shae Scarr** (Member Services Coordinator)
- **Phillip Saldaña** (Operations & Accounts Manager)
- **Paul Farmer** (CEO & Chief Member Advocate)

CREATING A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY

PROMOTING THE COMMUNITY
PROVIDING NETWORKING
OPPORTUNITIES
POLITICAL ACTION
REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS
OF BUSINESS WITH GOVERNMENT

Info@SalinasChamber.com
(831)751-7725

Last month was the 100th Anniversary of American women gaining the right to vote. On August 26, 1920, the 19th Amendment was adopted as part of the U.S. Constitution, 42 years after its first introduction to Congress. Nine years before the passage of the 19th Amendment, in 1911, women in California received the right to vote in statewide elections. While it has been a full century since women have had the legal right to vote, the struggle continues to ensure that we have that right in practice.

is a journey that will continue to exist both at the state and national level. According to figures from the National Conference of State Legislatures, women made up 25.4% of all state legislators in 2018. According to Wikipedia, as of 2019, approximately 31% of the California State Legislature was female. With the help of prominent civil rights activists and leaders, the work of reaching equality in representation continues.

Women are changing the landscape in California's politics and shaping policy, overcoming discrimination, institutional racism and stereotypes while making exceptional contributions. And today, we are at a pivotal point in history and have the opportunity to disrupt the status quo.

You may ask yourself – what can you do as an individual to help close the

gap for all women and accelerate progress for women of color? Start by using your vote in the upcoming elections to advance policies that support women, become politically active and advocate for programs that provide development and leadership opportunities for girls and women.

Finally – we must recognize that the struggle continues today. Conversations are still taking place around voter suppression and discrimination. And now, as we navigate through this challenging COVID-19 pandemic, we face possible restrictions on polling stations, limitations on vote-by-mail ballots, reduced number of polling locations, and the elimination of much-needed USPS sorting machines. For women in some areas, the battle to ensure true suffrage and their right to vote must continue.

Sincerely,



Despite the contributions of women of color, suffrage (the right to vote) was not a reality for all of them upon its passage in 1920. While some women of color were voting in California, for many Blacks, Chinese, Latinos, and Native Americans, the right to vote did not become a reality until the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Even with the ratification of the 19th Amendment, they remained disenfranchised as the 19th Amendment did not eliminate state laws that operated to keep blacks and other minority groups from the polls through voter suppression tactics -- poll taxes, literacy tests, white-only primaries, and other barriers and acts of violence and intimidation designed to silence them.

It was not until The Voting Rights Act was extended in 1975 that voting materials were required to be translated into languages other than English; this finally enabled many Latina women and immigrant voters to exercise their right to vote. Clearly, granting the right to vote did not ensure that all women would be truly enfranchised, and it has taken a century of additional measures to close loopholes and combat discrimination.

Though it has been nearly 100 years since women won the right to vote, the effort to increase female representation, both in numbers and in ethnic diversity,

➡ **ENDORSEMENTS** – Continued from page 1

about her positions. We expect her to continue the leadership legacy of the late Salinas Mayor Joe Gunter, whose family supports her candidacy. Finally, in the 150-year history of Salinas, the City has had only one female Mayor (Anna Caballero). The Salinas Valley Chamber thinks Ms. Craig is worthy of being the second woman to hold that distinction.

Salinas City Council, District 1 – Scott Davis

(Councilmember Scott Davis is running for reelection to a second four-year term.)

Scott Davis is the incumbent city councilmember and worthy of reelection. His three priorities for his second term: (1) make Salinas the most business-friendly city on the Central Coast (if not California), (2) improving the quality of life, particularly by increasing the supply of housing that is affordable, and (3) economic development. These priorities align well with the priorities of the Chamber.

He openly states his interest in identifying and reducing excessive government spending and seeing government operate more like the private sector. The Chamber appreciates elected officials who see economic growth, increasing the supply of residential units, and fiscal responsibility as critical to the future of the city.

Chamber leaders find Councilmember Davis to be accessible and reasonable. We appreciate his detailed study of issues and the analytical questions he asks at council meetings. There is never any question about whether Councilmember Davis reads the staff reports and public comments about items on the meeting agendas. We hope he'll get more traction on getting those questions answered in his second term.



Davis



Osornio

Salinas City Council, District 4 -

Orlando Osornio

(Councilmember Gloria de la Rosa is not running for reelection after five four-year terms.)

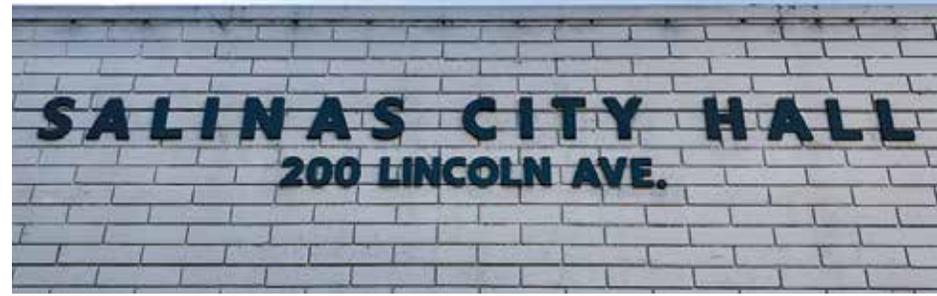
Orlando Osornio will bring small business experience to the city council as the owner of a Salinas food truck, Tortas al 100. He wants his business "to be known as a local small business where we make everyone feel like family" with a vision "to bring unique and quality Mexican food, while offering over the top customer service." This is the kind of spirit the Chamber wants on the Salinas City Council.

He was recently profiled in a national news story about Latino small businesses and the challenges they face. Because of his negative experience accumulating debt as a young man, he chose not to rely on a bank loan when he started his business. Instead, he invested his savings to start it and his earnings to grow it. Mr. Osornio has valuable perspectives to add to the city council about work ethics, the dangers of excessive debt, and the dilemmas and challenges involved in starting and growing a small business.

➡ **CORPUZ** – Continued from page 1

Ray has pushed for the creation of a Dark Fiber network to support the community's access to broadband; the first leg of this network is expected to be completed early next year.

Ray will leave a lasting legacy in the City through his leadership in the creation and adoption of new City policies to support ongoing economic and neighborhood development efforts that make our City government more accessible and inclusive. Under his tenure, the City completed a new Economic Development Element and incorporated it into its General Plan, thus ensuring that the City takes economic development into account in the future. Further, the City has adopted the Downtown and Alisal Vibrancy Plans – in both cases, these plans were created not just with the input of affected communities, but by



Orlando Osornio serves on the City of Salinas Small Business Task Force, which is advising the city on relief and recovery policies from negative impacts from coronavirus public health orders. We appreciated his humility and thoughtfulness and think he will work well with other members of the council to find consensus on difficult issues.

Salinas City Council, District 6 -

Vanessa Robinson

(Councilmember Tony Villegas is not running for reelection after one four-year term.)

Vanessa Robinson is someone who will add energy and commitment to the city council as an "outsider" with a strong vision for the future of Salinas. We were impressed by her knowledge of the often-frustrating regulatory challenges that businesses deal with in Salinas and her desire to make Salinas more appealing to young entrepreneurial people who grow up in Salinas but then leave permanently to more innovative and visionary regions.



Robinson

Ms. Robinson states that her first priority will be making the city's planning department and permit center more efficient and responsive. She's quite aware of anecdotes circulating in the community about hassles in getting permits, and she recognizes how these stories discourage people from starting and expanding businesses and improving their properties. We look forward to seeing her work with other city council members to achieve this long-elusive goal of the Chamber and other local business groups.

Housing supply is another issue that Ms. Robinson regards as a priority. In addition to pointing out the lack of affordable housing for lower income residents, she indicates her interest in increasing the supply of housing in Salinas for middle-income households. This problem doesn't get the attention that the lack of low-income housing receives, but Chamber members identify it as a major obstacle to recruiting and retaining employees.

We expect that Vanessa Robinson will ask the city staff tough questions and insist that tough questions from other members of the council get answered. ■

members of these communities. These plans establish a vision for the Downtown and Alisal Communities.

Ray initiated training for City staff in the principles of Governing for Racial Equity, with 70% of City staff receiving training on the topic, which will enable City staff to better serve the community for years to come. And as the Chamber pointed out in the cover of our August 2020 Business Journal, five of the eight departments at the City are headed by women.

Ray, the Chamber thanks you for your leadership and we wish you the best in your retirement.



Questions Asked by the Candidate Review Committee

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce asked all qualified candidates for Salinas Mayor, Salinas City Council, and Hartnell Community College District Board of Trustees to fill out a simple questionnaire. Then the candidates were invited to participate at the same time in a virtual interview, typically lasting an hour.

On the right is the list of questions that the Candidate Review Committee asked. These questions were not provided in advance to the candidates.

The committee felt these questions provided a fair opportunity for candidates to prove they knew the issues important to the office they were seeking and could address them effectively if they held the office. Committee members were pleased to hear some candidates, after the interview, mention that the committee asked an excellent set of questions.

Questions for Salinas Mayor and City Council Candidates

1. What qualities will you be looking for in a new city manager?
2. What would you like to see the City of Salinas do differently in the next two years?
3. What are your ideas for balancing the city's budget and reducing or eliminating the structural budget deficit?
4. What is the Salinas business community doing right at this time of crisis? What is it doing wrong? How would you like the business community to help the community?
5. What are your views on how the City of Salinas and neighboring jurisdictions handle housing supply and demand for the City of Salinas?
6. What's your long-term vision for the city's economy? What should the city do to make your vision happen?
7. What are your views on how the City of Salinas should address the needs of people who do not have a home?



As we enter the seventh month of the coronavirus pandemic we are grateful for the opportunity to assist our clients and community with their legal needs. We are available to meet with you in person, via email, or phone or video conferencing. The well-being of our employees, clients, business partners and community remains our constant priority. We value our relationship with you and are committed to staying connected and helping you through this extraordinary time.

AREAS OF PRACTICE

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Tax Planning and Controversy
Real Estate Transactions

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Heston Retires as President of KSBW

Joseph Heston Retires as President of KSBW-TV & Central Coast ABC After Five-Decade Career



Heston

Joseph W. Heston, a broadcast industry leader who has served since 1999 as president and general manager of KSBW-TV, Central Coast ABC (CCABC) and Estrella Costa Central-Hearst Television's NBC, digital ABC and Estrella TV subchannels serving the Monterey-Salinas, California, television market—is retiring from Hearst Television.

Heston caps a career in television broadcasting characterized by news leadership, quality local programming, and tireless advocacy for broadcasters' community-service mission. It began in the 1970s and took him, prior to California's Central Coast, to Hearst

TV stations in Boston, Pittsburgh, and Baltimore. "How fortunate I am to have had more than three decades with Hearst," Heston said.

A milestone in Heston's KSBW stewardship—and for local television broadcasting in California—was the 2011 launch, using a portion of KSBW's digital spectrum, of Central Coast ABC (CCABC); the Monterey-Salinas market's first ABC-affiliated station in more than a half-century. The new digital subchannel was quickly embraced by viewers. Sign-on to sign-off, CCABC has since ranked among the top-three local stations on the Central Coast. In 2016, KSBW launched a regional Estrella TV subchannel, Estrella Costa Central, to provide additional programming for the region's Hispanic viewers.

During Heston's tenure, KSBW and CCABC expanded their weekly news and information programming. KSBW has been recognized with RTNDA regional

Edward R. Murrow Awards for Best Newscast and Breaking News, and regional Emmy Awards for Best Newscast and Best Breaking News Coverage, in competition with stations in all northern California markets.

KSBW's essential community-service role was recently underscored by its success in helping raise more than \$528,000—a record for a one-day fundraiser in the market's history—on behalf of area food banks to aid COVID-19-distressed families throughout the Central Coast region. KSBW also sponsors numerous annual initiatives in the areas of childhood development and education, among other charitable efforts.

Thirty-five of Heston's 45 years in television broadcasting have been spent at Hearst. Before taking over at KSBW in 1999, he was vice president and station manager of Hearst Television's WTAE-TV, the ABC affiliate in Pittsburgh. He also worked at WTAE Hearst's stations in Baltimore and Boston.

Heston has been honored for community leadership by the Monterey Chamber of Commerce, Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce and the United Way, and in 2011 he received a "Trailblazer Award" from the Salvation Army—one of only four given in the western United States that year—for outstanding public service support. While in Monterey, Heston served for six years on the board of the United Way, and ten years on the board of the highly diverse and academically demanding York School. The Chamber wishes Joe the best in his retirement. ■



Williamson Named New President of KSBW

Laura Williamson Named President & General Manager Of KSBW-TV & Central Coast ABC



Williamson

Laura Williamson, for nearly 25 years a senior sales executive at KCRA-TV and KQCA-TV, Hearst Television's NBC and MyNetworkTV duopoly serving the Sacramento-Stockton-Modesto, California, television market, has been named president and general manager of KSBW-TV, Central Coast ABC (CC ABC) and Estrella Costa Central—the company's NBC, digital ABC and Estrella TV subchannels serving the Monterey-Salinas, California, television market.

Williamson, whose appointment is effective September 8, 2020, succeeds Joseph W. Heston, who announced plans to retire after more than three decades with Hearst Television.

"Laura has been instrumental in the growth of our Sacramento duopoly," said Hearst Television President Jordan Wertlieb. "A native Californian, her familiarity with the region and her management experience at one of the nation's leading local stations make her ideally suited to work with the outstanding team in Monterey in achieving even greater success."

"Laura's track record of success and her engagement in the business and civic communities in our state's capital make her a wonderful fit for leading KSBW, CC ABC and Estrella Costa Central," Heston said. "I look forward to working with

Laura in her transition to the Central Coast."

A Bay Area native, Williamson most recently served for a dozen years as general sales manager of KCRA-TV; she previously was the station's local sales manager. She joined Hearst Television in 1996 as an account executive at KCRA sister station KQCA-TV and was promoted to local sales manager in 2000. She began her sales career in the hotel industry, initially in her hometown of San Francisco at that city's prestigious Fairmont Hotel. She later held positions at the Sacramento Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Hyatt Regency Sacramento, where she was sales manager.

Williamson was a member of the Junior League of Sacramento and served on the board of the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Sacramento, helping that organization launch a new facility in South Sacramento. Through a Hearst partnership with the non-profit American Corporate Partners (ACP), she has participated in the ACP mentoring program to assist veterans transitioning from the military to the private sector. She also has actively supported various charitable initiatives within the Sacramento business community.

Williamson is a graduate of the University of California, Berkeley, with a degree in Liberal Arts. ■

Chamber Endorsements for Hartnell College Board



In addition to the endorsements for the Salinas City Council and Mayor, the Salinas Valley Chamber's Candidate Review Committee also interviewed candidates vying to serve on the Hartnell College Board of Trustees. The College is at an important crossroads as the Board must hire a new Superintendent, as well as oversee the expansion of the College to new locations in South County and Castroville.

After performing our due diligence, we are pleased to offer our endorsement to the following candidates.

Hartnell College, Area 1 – Manuel Osorio

(Manuel Osorio is the incumbent, running for reelection.)

Manuel Osorio currently serves as Hartnell College Board Trustee for Area 1. He received his A.A. at Cabrillo College, B.A. at UCSC and M.A. at San Jose State University. As the first (and only) to attend college in his family, Manuel spent 34 years working at Cabrillo College.

A strong advocate for community colleges, he has served on the Cabrillo College Foundation Board of Directors for five years. Manuel was a Trustee for the Pajaro Valley Unified School District for 11 years and a Trustee of the North Monterey County Unified School District Board for 4 years.

Manuel is a common sense leader with deep educational experience that Hartnell can rely on as the Board hires a new College President. He has earned our support and we hope he'll earn yours, as well.



Osorio

Hartnell College, Area 2 - Aurelio Salazar Jr.

(Aurelio Salazar Jr. is running for reelection)

Aurelio Salazar Jr. is again endorsed by the Chamber for this seat. He wants to see the college continue existing partnerships with local industries to meet their workforce needs by providing students with the skills to succeed. He touts how the college has balanced its budget (while maintaining 20% operating reserves) since his election, and he wants to sustain that record now as current president of the college board.

As an advocate of fiscal responsibility, Mr. Salazar wants

to see the college district continue to award bids for Measure T construction projects under fair and open competition.

Mr. Salazar is widely respected by all of our Candidate Review Committee members who have had the pleasure to work with him. He is reasonable, professional and compassionate. He is one of "Salinas's own," with his family having moved here when he was eight years old. The son of farmworkers, he has succeeded despite remarkable adversity including the death of both his mother and father when he was a child. His resilience has enabled him to survive difficult financial circumstances (including having to live for a time in a garage). He calls Hartnell his "pathway out of poverty." Now armed with a Master's Degree from San Jose State, Aurelio is using his considerable talents to give back to our community.



Salazar

Hartnell College, Area 3 - Kari Valdés

(Patricia Donohue is not running for reelection)

Kari Valdés is the Chamber's choice for this seat. In the 2000s, she served on the Hartnell College Board for three years and ultimately became board president. (She resigned in 2008 when she moved to Hollister). She was involved in the selection of a new college president during her service - good preparation and perspective for the upcoming selection process for a new college president.

Kari is a focused business professional, with over seventeen years of experience in the Salinas Produce Industry. She has been the Director of Food Safety & Quality at Taylor Farms since 2010 where she oversees a team of 8 managers and approximately 200 employees at four processing plants.

Kari has a long history of active involvement in the partnership between Hartnell and the agriculture industry that enriches students' experiences and their academic and career prospects. She knows how vital it is to connect and support local students with careers, boosting the local economy, increasing opportunities for job advancement and raising the standard of living in our community. As an advocate of fiscal responsibility, Ms. Valdés wants to see the college district continue to award bids for Measure T construction projects under fair and open competition.

We have confidence in her commitment to focus on the time-consuming challenges of serving on a community college governing board.

Hartnell College, Area 4 – Irma C. Lopez

(Irma C. Lopez is finishing a two-year term and is running for a four-year term.)

Irma Lopez currently serves as the Hartnell College Board Trustee for District 4 and has been honored with the "City of Champions" commendation award presented by the City of Salinas. She works with the Monterey County Office of Education's AmeriCorps Program. Should she be re-elected, her priorities include ensuring funding is being allocated correctly and helping students and staff navigate the changes required by the COVID-19 pandemic. Please join the Chamber in supporting Irma Lopez for Hartnell College's Board.



Valdés



Lopez



Hartnell Community College District is building a new nursing and health sciences building at its main campus in Salinas using Measure T funds. The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce wants to see the college continue a well-managed, fiscally responsible construction program at its various campuses.

RAFFLE: Win Gift Cards to Local Restaurants

The Salinas Valley Chamber supports local member restaurants by hosting a locals-only gift card raffle through November

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce is excited to announce that we are hosting a community-wide gift card raffle for Monterey County residents that features our member restaurants.

The Chamber has purchased gift cards from many of our member restaurants which we will raffle off every Friday for 10 weeks, starting on September 18th. To enter into the raffle, you must live in Monterey County, be 18 years or older, and follow us on our new Facebook page, @SVCCMemberHappenings. Every Monday we will post about the featured member restaurant whose gift card you have a chance to win for that Friday.

To enter, all you have to do is:

- like the post
- tag a Monterey County based business in the comments
- share the post.

We will collect the names of everyone who participates and enter them into that week's raffle. On Friday afternoons, we will announce



the winner by posting a video of the drawing on our Facebook page; the winner has one week to contact us at 831-751-7725 to claim their prize.

Gift cards will range in value and will be to restaurants that may include the Pizza Factory, Tarpys, McDonald's, Black Bear Diner, Turf Club Catering, Gino's Fine Italian Food, Red Lobster, and more. We are pleased to support our members in this way. They support our community by being members of your Salinas Chamber, so let's come together and support them by dining locally!

Additionally, we asked our member restaurants to donate gift cards to fire evacuees, which we delivered to evacuation centers in late August. Many of our wonderful members stepped up and together they donated over \$1,000 in gift cards that went directly into the hands of local families displaced by the River and Carmel fires. A special thank you to Salinas Chamber Board Member, Raymond Costa, for his donation of \$500 to his locally-owned McDonald's restaurants in Salinas, Soledad, King City, Gonzales, and Greenfield. Thank you to all our members who participated. ■



Rate Increase in the Works for Sewage

Monterey One Water (M1W), formerly known as the Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency (MRWPCA), is the sewage treatment public agency for much of the Monterey Peninsula, some of North County, and the City of Salinas. In recent years, Monterey One Water has received news media attention for its new Pure Water Monterey (PWM) facility, which recycles wastewater into drinking water that is then stored in an underground aquifer.

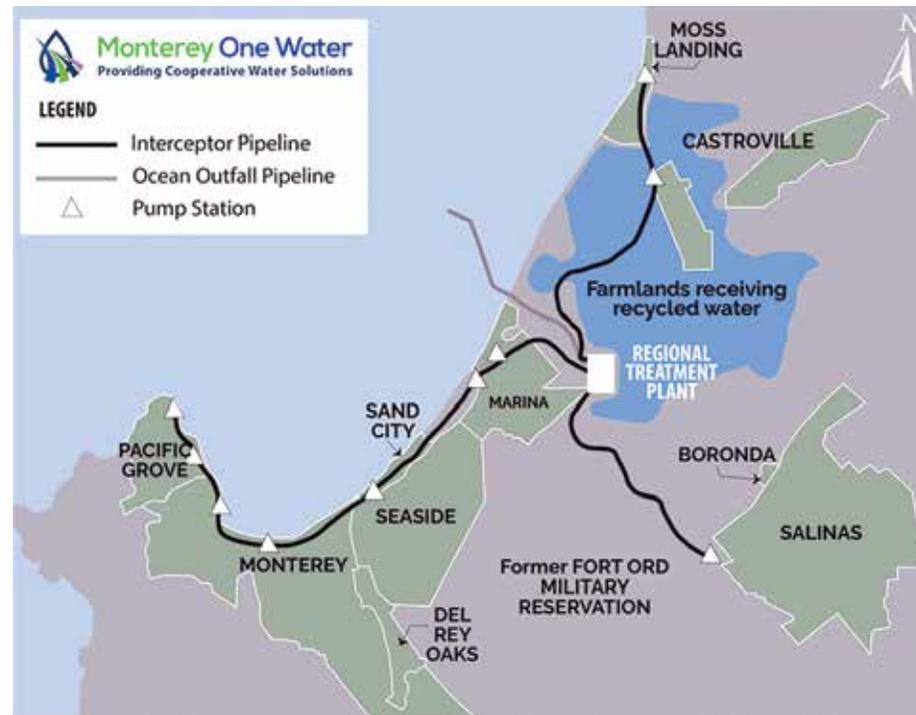
M1W indicates that coronavirus has reduced its revenue, which will compromise its ability to provide wastewater services to its customers unless rates are increased. The agency proposes to increase rates by 16.6%. This would provide \$4.5 million per year in additional revenue.

This revenue is for operational purposes and will not fund any

expenses associated with Pure Water Monterey Groundwater Replenishment Project or another capital project of the agency, the Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project.

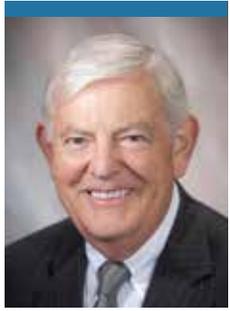
Of this total, \$2.2 million would come from Salinas ratepayers: \$1.8 million from residential and \$400,000 from commercial accounts. Residential accounts would see a \$3.50 monthly increase and commercial accounts would see an average increase of \$3.57.

In addition, the City of Salinas wants to increase its own Sanitary Sewer Collector Fee added on to the bills for M1W services. This fee increase, estimated to be \$1.50 per month for residential and commercial customers, would be used to maintain sanitary sewer infrastructure. It would provide an additional \$1.1 million per year to the city. ■



California's Proposition 15 = Higher Property Taxes

by Stephen Pearson, Attorney, Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss



The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce is OPPOSED to Proposition 15

California's Proposition 15 Would Enact Higher Property Taxes Plus Severe Economic Impacts On Property Owners, Consumers And Businesses

Proposition 15, the so-called "split roll initiative," will be on the ballot for the November 2020 election. If Proposition 15 passes not only will property owners see their property tax bills jump, but tenants and consumers will be penalized when the cost of higher property taxes is passed on to them.

Why is Proposition 15 Called the "Split Roll Initiative"?

Proposition 15 is called the split roll initiative because it would separate the real property tax rolls into two parts or "tax rolls" - one for residential property, and one for all other real estate in California.

A Partial Revocation of Proposition 13

Proposition 13 was passed by the voters in 1978 to limit property tax increases and to provide stability to property values for property tax purposes. Proposition 13 limits property tax to 1% of the purchase price of real property; and more importantly, it protects property from reassessment unless there is a sale or change in ownership. The split roll initiative would revoke the protections of Proposition 13 for all non-residential property.

What Will Proposition 15 Do?

Proposition 15, if passed, will result in dramatic increases in real property tax for many commercial property owners.

Commercial and industrial property would be reassessed every 2 years, to fair market value. Because property tax is based on property valuation, commercial and business property suddenly would be taxed based on the present fair market value of the property. For property that has not recently sold or transferred, and especially that property which has been owned by the same owners prior to 1978 when the Jarvis Gann Amendment passed, owners will likely see dramatic increases in their assessed value, and consequently their real estate taxes.

Unless real estate is specifically exempted from reassessment (see below) it will be reassessed starting in 2022. Office buildings, factories, hotels, grocery stores, manufacturing facilities, automobile dealerships, clubs, food processing facilities, wineries, warehouses, shopping centers, retail and wholesale stores and outlets would all be reassessed, and their owners would be subject to increased real property taxation at 1% of the current fair market value.

What Property Would Be Exempt from Proposition 15 Reassessment?

1. Residential Property. Residential property, including single-family houses and multi-unit structures. Therefore, homeowners and residential multi-family property landlords would not face reassessment if this initiative passes.
2. Agricultural Property. Agricultural property "used for producing commercial agricultural commodities" would be exempt. Thus, farms, ranches, vineyards and orchards would remain under the protection of the Jarvis Gann Amendment. However, facilities used to process, pack and distribute agricultural products, warehouses, office facilities used by agricultural producers, growers and shippers, wineries, and agricultural transportation companies would not be exempt. Vines and trees may not be treated as "land," allowing their value to be reassessed.
3. Property Valued Under \$3 Million. Individual commercial and industrial properties valued at \$3 million or less would be exempt. However, if a property owner has more than one parcel of commercial or industrial property, then all of that owner's property would be reassessed.
4. "Underused" Property. If property zoned commercial or industrial is used for housing it would be exempt so long as it is used as "long term residential property." "Long term residential property" is not defined, and the initiative gives the California Legislature control over this exemption.
5. "Mixed Use" Property. If commercial or industrial property is partially used for residential purposes, the Legislature is to "ensure" that only the non-residential

portion of the property is subject to reassessment. The Legislature may, but is not required to, free from reassessment any commercial and industrial property which is more than 75% residential (by square footage).

The So-Called "Small Business Exemption"

The supporters claim property used by "small businesses" is exempt from reassessment. However the "exemption" really amounts only to a delay in reassessment. All commercial and industrial property with 50% or more of its square footage leased to "small businesses" would not be reassessed until 2025, allegedly to allow "small businesses" and their landlords to "make adjustments" to the new reality of higher taxes.

What is a small business?

- i. One with fewer than 50 employees
- ii. The small business is "independently owned and operated"
- iii. The small business owns other real property in California

The Economic Consequences of Proposition of 15

1. Substantial real estate tax increases will occur throughout the State in a time of unprecedented economic uncertainty in California.
2. Tenants who pay the landlord's real estate taxes on their leased property will see their annual costs accelerate, in some cases dramatically.
3. Landlords who retain the obligation to pay property taxes for tenant-occupied property will see their net revenue decrease or disappear.
4. The tax increase will almost certainly be passed on to consumers of retail and wholesale goods and services, and agricultural commodities, increasing the cost of living.
5. Tax increases will be passed on to commercial and industrial tenants in new lease arrangements.
6. Business and Industry will suffer another negative impact to doing business in California.

What Will it Cost to Administer the New System?

The cost of administering an entirely revised tax system will be paid by the taxpayers, including the costs of reassessment and the inevitable litigation which will follow in the wake of property tax increases. There are no limits on the administrative costs and they will be substantial. The California Association of Assessors (which opposes Proposition 15) estimates California's counties' administrative costs to implement the mandates of Proposition 15 would reach \$1 billion "with no guarantee it would generate a fraction of the promised \$12.5 billion in new property tax revenue."

Who Opposes Proposition 15?

Proposition 15 is opposed by a wide variety of business and property owners, and by the county assessors who would be burdened with implementing the major change in how property taxes are levied on business and commercial real estate in California. The opposition includes the California Business Roundtable, the Conference of the NAACP, Western Growers Association and the California Wine Institute, the California State Club Association, and many local and regional Chambers of Commerce and farm bureaus.

Conclusion

Proposition 15 is bad for business and bad for consumers. It would lead to costly chaos in the administration of California's real property tax system with little assurance that it would raise sufficient new tax revenue to offset the costs to consumers and the loss of new business in California. For more information see NoOnProp15.org

This article is intended to address topics of general interest and should not be construed as legal advice. © 2020 Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss. Stephen Pearson, a lawyer with Noland Hamerly Etienne & Hoss, focuses his practice on the resolution of complex business, trusts, construction, and real estate disputes. Mr. Pearson has litigated in both state and federal courts, and has extensive experience in the mediation and arbitration of disputes.

Grow Salinas Fund Can Help Small Businesses

Local governments throughout California are creating and administering funds to help small businesses survive government coronavirus public health restrictions that restrict commercial activity. The City of Salinas is now one of them.

Community Development Department and provided low-interest loans to a handful of small businesses in the following five years. Now it is reviving as a coronavirus relief and recovery program.

This program is not the only



At their August 18, 2020 meeting, the Salinas City Council approved spending \$546,290 originating from federal funding sources for the "Grow Salinas Fund Small Business Assistance Program." This program will provide emergency grants, forgivable loans and micro-loans to help relief and recovery for small businesses that have struggled as a result of coronavirus public health orders.

If the "Grow Salinas Fund" sounds familiar, you're correct. The city's original program was established in 2012 with the assistance of an organization called the National Development Council. It was administered by the city's

effort by the City of Salinas to help businesses endure coronavirus restrictions. The city's also set up a website of resources, a Small Business Assistance Hotline, and a business advisory group called the Small Business and Economic Recovery Task Force. Your Chamber of Commerce has a representative on this Task Force.

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce told the Salinas City Council before its vote that it supported the Grow Salinas Fund Small Business Assistance Program. Your Chamber also thanked the city council for recognizing the role they can play in helping small businesses during this time.

For information or assistance on seeking funding from the Grow Salinas Fund Small Business Assistance Program, please contact Paul Farmer, President and CEO of the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce, at 831-751-7725 or President@SalinasChamber.com.



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Wildfires Present New Challenges During COVID-Era

by Grower-Shipper Association

While farmers and farming companies have worked diligently to protect employees and continue to supply fruits and vegetables to consumers during this pandemic, our region has been

dealt another blow with wildfires which are now significantly impacting our area. The challenges farmers face seem never greater than what we have seen in 2020.

As part of crucial efforts to protect farm employees, there is some cross-over between wildfire and COVID-19 practices. The wearing of face masks and facial coverings provides some limited protection from smoke and ash for essential employees. However, there are regulations in place that mandate N95 masks are made available to employees working outside if air quality reaches an unhealthy level.

Agricultural commissioners in our region have already distributed thousands of N95 masks for use by farm workers over the last few days. County officials, agricultural industry leaders, which include the Grower-Shipper Association of Central California (GSA), and the California Department of Food and Agriculture have requested additional N95 respirators for farm workers in our area. As a result of this request, approximately 100,000 N95 respirators have been secured through California's Office of Emergency Services for distribution to employers for farm workers throughout the Salinas Valley. Similar allotments have been sent to ag commissioners' offices throughout California to support protective efforts.

GSA is also providing information to its members about regulatory standards in place to protect outside



workers during periods of unhealthy air quality to assist them in implementing mandatory practices during these wildfires. Workplace safety has remained at the forefront throughout

the pandemic, but farmers and farming companies know they must also prioritize exposure mitigation measures in place to help protect employees from wildfire smoke.

Another continual priority for our region's farmers is food safety. As

wildfires have become more prevalent, studies and analysis have been done regarding their impact on produce safety. One study published in 2018 from U.C. Cooperative Extension titled "Produce Safety After Urban Wildfire" explored the impact of smoke from 2017 fire events onto local Sonoma County produce. Based on preliminary findings the report states "...produce safety was not significantly affected by the fires and may be mitigated by washing produce."

Farmers and their employees are continually assessing and monitoring their crops and fields for any safety or quality issues which may result during the growing season. Farmers and their families eat what they grow so food safety is prioritized each and every day even as they navigate a pandemic and wildfires.

We are a resilient industry with dedicated farmers and farm employees. But 2020 is testing everyone's resolve and we must lean on each other and protect each other during these unprecedented times.

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McDonald's	Multiple Locations	Varies	mcdonalds.com		✓	✓		✓
Turf Club Catering	216 John St	831-753-1411	turfclubcatering.com	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Loose Caboose Sandwich Depot	934 Park Row	831-422-7169	N/A		✓			✓
Aromas Grill	304 Carpenteria Rd in Aromas	831-726-9999	aromasgrill.com	✓	✓			✓
Chef Lee's Mandarin House	1616 N Main St	831-442-3385	chefleesmandarinhouse.com		✓	✓		✓
Pizza Factory	926 S Main St	831-758-3227	pizzafactory.com	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Flying Artichoke	40 Mortensen Ave	831-759-9096	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Yangtse's Taste of Thai	328-A Main St	831-754-2223	yangtsetasteofthaica.com	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Portobello's Café	150 Main St Ste 116	831-753-0797	portabellos@redshift.com	✓	✓		✓	✓
La Plaza Bakery & Café	Multiple Locations	Varies	laplazabakery.com	✓	✓		✓	✓
Red Lobster	1720 N Main St	831-443-8724	redlobster.com		✓	✓	✓	✓
Wingstop	Salinas & Seaside Locations	Varies	wingstop.com		✓	✓	✓	✓
The Whole Enchilada	7902 Hwy 1 in Moss Landing	831-633-3038	wenchilada.com	✓	✓		✓	✓
Tarpy's Roadhouse	2999 Monterey—Salinas Hwy	831-647-1444	tarpys.com	✓	✓		✓	✓
XL Public House	127 Main St	831-800-7625	N/A	✓	✓	✓		✓
Alvarado Street Brewery	1315 Dayton St Ste E	831-800-3332	burphopsnow.com		✓	✓		
The Grower's Pub	227 Monterey St	831-754-1488	growerspub.com	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bagel Corner	818 Park Row	831-771-8670	bagelcornerbistro.com	✓	✓	✓		✓
Scales Seafood & Steaks	30 Fisherman's Wharf	831-275-1331	scalesmonterey.com	✓	✓			✓
BJ's Restaurant & Brewhouse	1730 N Main St	831-737-1690	bjsrestaurants.com	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gordon's Café & Catering	343 Main St	831-422-4133	gordonscafeandcatering.com	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gino's Fine Italian Good	1410 S Main St	831-422-1814	ginospasta.com		✓	✓	✓	✓
Pastability's	11 W Acacia St	831-998-7715	postabilitys.net	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Round Table Pizza	1457 N Main St 1160 S Main St	831-449-9121 831-757-7400	roundtable.com		✓	✓	✓	✓
Oldtown Fish & Chips	18 E Gabilan St	831-422-3011	oldtownfishchips.business.site/?m=true		✓	✓		
Black Bear Diner	1391 N Davis Rd	831-449-1545	blackbeardiner.com/location/salinas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Salt Wood Kitchen and Oysterette	3295 Dunes Drive	831-883-5535	thesanctuarybeachresort.com	✓	✓			

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Don't Let Your Emotions Manage Your Investments

by Bill Hastie, MBA



Bill Hastie

Illusion of Control

This is a cognitive bias that describes the tendency of investors to believe that they can control or at least influence investment outcomes when they obviously cannot. When studied, some

casino patrons swear that they are able to impact random outcomes such as the roll of a dice. The belief is often that they are "better guessers" and therefore pursue the opportunity to win more often, not always with the desired result. The illusion of control bias can often display itself as the emotional bias of overconfidence.

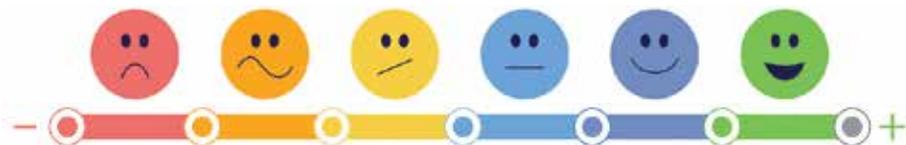
Excessive investment trading can be a sign of an investor with an illusion of control. Although many studies have shown that there is no correlation between a high volume of trading and investment results, these investors often use one of the many online trading sites that offer inexpensive trading to virtually become day traders. This can often drive the investor away from a prudent investment strategy to little more than speculation.

Who Can Help?

An experienced investment advisor should be able to help an investor in two very important ways. First, an advisor can help the investor "flat line emotions" – not getting too upset with losses and not too excited about gains. Successful investing is a long-term process that will involve both gains and losses along the way. Second, to recognize the particular bias affecting the investor and help them make prudent, rational investment decisions. ■

Bill Hastie, MBA is the Founder of locally-owned Hastie Financial Group. If you would like to discuss your personal or company's investment needs, please contact Bill at william.hastie@hastiefg.com

We are emotional beings, there is no way around it. We love, we laugh, we cry – how and what we do is very often dictated by our emotions or by what we think or believe about something. Herein lies the collision of human nature and technical investment management, and the outcome is rarely as intended.



Behavioral finance, the study of the thoughts, emotions and beliefs that often drive financial decisions, cites two types of biases that drive irrational decisions - emotional and cognitive. Simply put, emotional biases are a result of attitudes and feelings that cause the decision to deviate from the rational decisions of traditional finance. Cognitive biases, on the other hand, are more basic statistical, information processing and memory errors that cause the decision to deviate from rationality. Here are two of the most common biases that seem to affect investors the most.

Loss Aversion

This is an emotional bias that effects how an investor sees potential investment loss very differently than potential investment gain. A number of studies of loss aversion have concluded that the possibility of loss is, on average, twice as powerful a motivator as the possibility of making a gain. For example, a risk averse person might demand a \$2 gain for every \$1 placed at risk. In this scenario, risks that do not "pay double" are not acceptable.

Loss aversion can also keep some investors from making prudent decisions about which investment to hold in a portfolio and which to sell. When an investor has experienced a substantial loss in an investment, the loss averse investor may tend to hold on to the investment waiting for it to "come back" even if all indications are that it will not.



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California Employment Report for July 2020

by California Business Roundtable

The Center for Jobs and the Economy has released our initial analysis of the July Employment Report from the California Employment Development Department. For additional information and data about the California economy visit www.centerforjobs.org/ca.

California's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate again eased, going from 14.9% in June to 13.3% in July. The unadjusted rate—the more relevant measure given the extent to which seasonal factors have been overwhelmed by the economic closures—went from 15.1% to 13.7%. Both numbers still exceed the comparable highs in the pre-COVID period extending back to 1976 under the current data series.

As with previous months during the current crisis, the July numbers are primarily a snapshot of the conditions during the week of July 12th when the surveys behind the numbers were completed. Technical issues also remain. The household survey used to estimate the labor force numbers continued to have a low but still statistically acceptable response rate. The response rate for the establishment survey used to estimate the job numbers, however, was higher than the 2019 average. Misclassification of the unemployed also continues, but at a diminishing rate, with the potential effect on the published unadjusted numbers being an increase of up to an additional 0.8 point.

More importantly, the more current unemployment insurance initial claims data (regular program and PUA claims by the self-employed) showed more erratic movement in the period after the week of the 12th, rising in the following two weeks, dropping the following two, and then edging up in the latest data for the week of August 15. Unemployment as measured by continuing claims rose by about an additional 18% between the week of July 12 and the first week of August as smaller businesses continue to close, as temporary layoffs shift to permanent, and as employers of all sizes have been forced to adjust their post-COVID jobs planning.

Telecommuting, however, still appears to be a key element keeping unemployment and the condition of state revenues from getting worse. The latest weekly data now shows weekly state tax withholding since March 0.9% above the comparable period in 2019. While not incorporating the all-critical capital gains components, this indicator continues to illustrate that the higher wage workers subject to the state's income tax have remained employed to a higher degree during this crisis. Overall, state tax collections for April to July were \$4.3 billion above the May Revise projections, suggesting telecommuting has instilled a high degree of resiliency in the state economy and fiscal conditions. ■

California Unemployment Rate Level

13.3%+

CA Unemployment Rate

California's reported unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted) in July declined 1.6 points to 13.3%. Continuing COVID-related issues with the core surveys used to estimate the labor force and jobs numbers, as discussed above, indicate the actual rate was somewhat higher although not to the same degree as in prior months.

Total reported employment rose 153,700 from the revised June numbers, while total unemployment dropped by 320,800.

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Superhero to Seniors During Covid-19



Alliance on Aging Gives Away Colorful Masks for Seniors

Quick—who do you call when you need help with Medicare, tax counseling and other services for seniors? Why, the Alliance on Aging (AOA), of course! Celebrating its 50th anniversary of serving the local community, the AOA has been in the forefront of serving seniors since 1970s. Throughout the course of this pandemic, the Alliance on Aging has emerged as the clearinghouse for information and services on COVID-19 ranging from food resources for seniors to COVID-19 testing sites and now, face mask. Yes—we are making face masks available directly to seniors.

Thus far, AOA has distributed 2,690 face masks to low-income seniors living in senior apartment complexes throughout the county, staff and residents residing in residential and skilled nursing facilities, AOA senior clients and volunteers assisting seniors in the community. This heroic effort was made possible by the tireless efforts of AOA's Ombudsman Program Manager, Meggie Pina.

Immediately following the March Shelter-in-Place order, Ms. Pina recognized the urgent need for face masks for seniors to ensure their safety and well-being. She took to social media for help and partnered with the Monterey County Department of Health and other service organizations—Community Emergency Response Volunteers (CERV), the National Charity League (NCL), Blue Zone Project, Mask Makers of Monterey County, Monterey County Library and Seaside Mask Makers. Just last week, NCL delivered an additional 435 face masks for the effort.

In addition to face masks, Ms Pina and her superhero Ombudsman also collected 5,757 handmade cards from the community offering cheers to seniors and

delivered 16 iPads (through a grant from the Community Foundation of Monterey County and Hospice Giving Foundation) to enable families with loved ones in skilled nursing facilities to connect with each other.

Ombudsman act as advocates for residents living in long-term care facilities. Prior to the pandemic, the AOA Ombudsman made routine facility visits to long-term care facilities.

During the current crisis, AOA staff and volunteer Ombudsman are conducting COVID-19 check-ins calls with facility residents and administration. AOA Ombudsman are available to provide information and assistance to families and residents living in long-term care facilities. Ombudsman continue to investigate complaints of neglect and abuse while working with families on conflict resolution with senior facilities management.

"The most gratifying part of my job is making a difference in the lives of seniors living in long-term care facilities", said Marylou Esquivel, AOA Ombudsman who has been helping seniors for the past four years.

If you have questions or concerns regarding quality of care, COVID-19, visitation or residents' rights please contact the Alliance on Aging Ombudsman Program, call (831) 655-1334 or www.AllianceOnAging.org



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Chamber Events



The Chamber's Membership Development Director, Lindsey Knight, gathered a few socially-distanced Ambassadors and visited downtown restaurants. The Chamber provided information to help businesses open up on the sidewalks outside their businesses.



The Chamber's new Member Services Coordinator, Shae Scarr, got in on the action, as well. It was a great way to provide an important service, while getting to meet members and local business owners.



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The Latest Guidelines for Employers on COVID-19

by Sharilyn Payne, Fenton & Keller



The California Department of Fair Employment and Housing ("DFEH") and the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC") have issued guidelines addressing COVID-19 in the workplace. This information provides guidance in these uncertain times.

• **Symptoms:** Employers may ask employees if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms such as fever, chills, cough, or sore throat. This is protected health information that must be kept confidential in a separate employee medical file and not in employee personnel files.

• **Temperatures:** Taking employee temperatures is considered a medical examination that is only allowed when it is job-related and consistent with business necessity. Currently, employers may take the temperatures of employees entering the worksite to evaluate whether they pose a risk of spreading COVID-19 to others in the workplace.

• **Testing:** Employers may require employees to submit to viral testing (not antibody testing which does not detect current infection) to determine if they have COVID-19 before they may enter the workplace. This testing should be accurate, reliable, and part of a comprehensive plan to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 in the workplace. Employers should still require employees to engage in safety precautions including social distancing and regular handwashing.

• **Sending Employees Home:** An employer may send an employee home who is displaying symptoms of or who tests positive for COVID-19. Employers must provide eligible employees with the appropriate leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (employers with 500 or fewer employees), Healthy Workplaces/Healthy Families Act (all employers), the Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") and California Family Rights Act ("CFRA") (employers with 50 or more employees), and the Emergency Order applicable to food service workers. Local ordinances may also have leave requirements.

• **Returning Employees to Work:** Employers should be consistent in the

criteria they apply to return employees to work. Criteria include time based (14-day quarantine) or the employee testing negative. Employers may consult with the California Department of Public Health about current return to work guidelines by going to their website www.cdph.ca.gov or calling 1-833-4CA-4ALL.

• **Privacy:** An employer should not identify by name in the workplace any employee who is quarantined, has tested positive, or has come in contact with someone with COVID-19. The employer should notify employees who have had contact with the individual in a way that does not reveal the individual's identifying information. An employer may disclose to a public health agency the name of an employee it learns has COVID-19.

• **Personal Protective Equipment:** Employers may require employees to wear cloth face coverings. If an employee cannot meet this requirement due to a disability, the employer should ask for a note from a health care provider and then determine if it can accommodate the employee without undue hardship. Possible accommodations include having the employee work remotely, staggering shifts, or placing the employee on a leave of absence.

• **Discrimination:** Although individuals over the age of 65 and those with certain medical conditions have been identified as more vulnerable to COVID-19, employers cannot choose to not return those individuals to work, or not hire them, to protect them from COVID-19 risks. Doing so may subject the employer to a claim of discrimination based on age, disability, or medical condition.

As guidelines continue to change, the best that employers can do is keep up to date. The DFEH and EEOC guidelines can be found, respectively, at <https://bit.ly/2YpKWRh> and <https://bit.ly/3gkUy5Q>. ■

Sharilyn Payne is a lawyer with the Fenton Sharilyn Payne is a lawyer with the Fenton & Keller law firm in Monterey. This article is intended to address topics of general interest and should not be construed as legal advice. For more information, please visit www.fentonkeller.com.

MPC Awarded Grant for Low-Income Students

MPC Awarded \$1.75 Million Grant To Support Low-Income, First Generation Students



MONTEREY PENINSULA COLLEGE

EMonterey Peninsula College (MPC) was selected to receive a competitive five-year TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The grant begins September 1, 2020 with an annual award of \$351,069, bringing the five-year total to \$1,755,345.

News reached the college through Congressman Jimmy Panetta's Office, who was informed by the Department of Education. According to the Department's statement, "Through a grant competition, funds are awarded to institutions of higher education to provide opportunities for academic development, assist students with basic college requirements, and to motivate students toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education."

MPC's Interim Superintendent/President, David Martin, enthusiastically comments, "MPC's TRIO SSS Program has been successfully supporting first-generation college students and those from limited income backgrounds since 1980. We are so proud of our TRIO team and students for everything they have accomplished to this point. This new grant award is further proof of their dedication, commitment and success."

TRIO SSS offers a variety of services to students, including academic and transfer advising; academic support and tutoring; major/career exploration; counseling services; assistance with financial aid, college and scholarships applications; and four-year college/university tours. The Program Director, Grace O. Anongchanya, explains, "Each year

we serve approximately 200 students. Our goal is to help them graduate and transfer to four-year universities, and we have been extremely successful in achieving these objectives. Our graduation and transfer numbers are consistently higher than average rates for non-TRIO participants, and in the last year, 92% of our participants achieved good academic standing.

More information about the TRIO SSS Program is available at: <https://www.mpc.edu/student-services/specialized-programs/trio-programs/student-support-services>

Monterey Peninsula College - established in 1947

Monterey Peninsula College, part of California's public community college system, is an open-access institution, committed to fostering student learning and success by providing excellence in instructional programs, facilities, and services to support the goals of students pursuing transfer, career, basic skills, and lifelong learning opportunities. In addition to the scenic Monterey campus located on 90+ acres, MPC's district includes two excellent facilities in the former Fort Ord, to serve the residents in north Monterey County. As a comprehensive community college, MPC responds to the educational and cultural needs of its diverse community, distinguished for its outstanding academic programs and strong commitment to student success. To learn more about Monterey Peninsula College, please visit www.mpc.edu and follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. ■

High Tech & Ag Collaborate

by Susanne T. Stirling, CalChamber

Shared Interest in High Tech, Ag Products Elements in Close Economic Collaboration

The following answers to questions posed by the California Chamber of Commerce are from Ming-Chi Scott Lai, director general, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, San Francisco.

Taiwan-California Relations

Please describe your thoughts on the unique relationship between Taiwan and California.

Taiwan has been an important partner to California for many years, as our collaborations in various areas continue to grow. Taiwan is the seventh largest trading partner to California, reaching a bilateral trade volume of 26 billion U.S. dollars (USD) in 2019.

Among the goods imported to Taiwan from California, agricultural productions are especially popular. In 2019, Taiwanese customers consumed over 280 million USD of California agricultural products, making our country the 11th largest export market for California's agricultural goods.

Because Taiwan and California are both famous for their fast-growing high tech industries, our government established in the Bay Area our "Asia-Silicon Valley Development Agency" in 2016. This agency acts as a technology advancement R&D center to connect Taiwan's major high tech companies, such as Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), United Microelectronics Corporation (UMC), and Foxconn, with their local partners in Silicon Valley.

In addition to the close economic cooperation between Taiwan and California, many Taiwanese immigrants have settled down in the Bay Area and established their businesses here. These vibrant local Taiwanese communities have become an indispensable part of California's ethnoscape. Their contributions in culture, education, and economic development bring great momentum to the overall growth of the state.

COVID-19 Impact

As countries all over the world feel the pandemic, what is the economic impact of COVID-19 on Taiwan?

Taiwan has successfully controlled the spread of COVID-19 in its territory, with only 480 confirmed cases and seven deaths to date [comments received August 17, 2020]. For this reason, Taiwan's economy has remained strong, compared to other countries in the Asia Pacific area.

Taiwan was able to maintain an average growth rate of 1.54% in the first season and is expected to achieve 1.67% annual economic growth rate for the year of 2020.

To further boost our domestic economy, our government has issued the "Stimulus Voucher," in order to encourage Taiwanese consumers to spend more on basic retail and domestic travel. In an initial estimation, these vouchers have generated 1.3 billion Taiwan dollars (TWD) (44 million USD) for Taiwan's tourism industry, and we are expecting local retail businesses to reap similar benefits before the end of this year.

In the wake of increasing uncertainties in the Chinese market brought by COVID-19 and continued U.S.-China wrestling, many Taiwanese companies have decided to retreat from China and return to Taiwan. When President Tsai first

assumed office in 2016, she introduced the so-called "New Southbound Policy" (NSP). This policy focuses not only on traditional production trade with Southeast Asia countries, but also encompasses various other industries, such as tourism, education, medical/ health training, natural disaster prevention and more.

Our government took immediate action to help returning Taiwanese companies, especially small and medium enterprises, solve problems associated with land, water and power supply. As a result, the NSP policy has not only strengthened Taiwan's relationship with Southeast Asia countries, but has also created more incentives for Taiwanese companies to bring their factories and production lines home.

According to the latest statistics, the total investment from those returning companies has reached more than 752 billion TWD (25 billion USD). In the future, this policy will continue to help Taiwan businesses grow steadily and explore further avenues of cooperation with their Southeast Asia partners.

Challenges/Opportunities

With Taiwan's rapid economic rise and emphasis on trade, what are the challenges and opportunities facing Taiwan?

Many countries are still suffering blows from the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly shatters consumer and business spending. The resurgence of new cases continues to be a huge threat for the global economy's recovery.

Therefore, the unstable global economic situation has become Taiwan's biggest challenge in the foreseeable future, and our government plans on moving forward with caution.

As for opportunities in the future, the spread of COVID-19 has forced many countries to lock down their economies, and the global supply chain is now under restructuring. I believe Taiwan's strong foundry industries can quickly adapt to the new situation and continue to supply products with stable quality at a competitive price.

At the same time, Taiwan has profound biotechnology and medical industries that have continuously introduced innovative and reliable new products. Due to the rising demand from front line medical personnel, the "Made in Taiwan" surgical mask and personal protective equipment (PPE) have become largely popular globally. We believe this has become a promising area for Taiwanese companies, and the Taiwan government will vigorously help our manufacturers work with international partners to further expand their overseas market.

The Taiwan government has also taken steps in loosening the restrictions for travel. Now, foreign applicants with purposes other than tourism and social visits can apply for a Special Entry Permit to enter Taiwan. This policy will allow foreign companies to visit their Taiwanese partners and look for business opportunities in Taiwan.

Our democratic political system, rule of law, efficient government, talented human resources, and success in controlling the pandemic make Taiwan an ideal place for foreign investment.

As the Director General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in San Francisco, I would like to welcome all of you to reach out to our office—(415) 362-7680, sfo@mofa.gov.tw—for information about doing business in my country. We look forward to seeing you in Taiwan! ■



Director General Ming-Chi Scott Lai

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